

THE CHURCH AND EDUCATION.

From the days of the Reformation the education of the young has been felt as a responsibility resting on the Church of Christ. John Calvin, greatest of the Reformers, with mind and heart fed by his profound studies of the sacred Scriptures, affirmed this responsibility, established schools in Geneva and taught the people of the Reformed faith throughout the world the duty of universal education.

Our fathers who came into the wilds of America, built their cabins and then their schools and churches. The needs of higher education were early and sorely felt, for citizenship, for leadership, for the Christian ministry, and they built Log Colleges also for the Christian education of their young men.

In the present day we have come to a time of some confusion and have some difficult problems. State Institutions have grown by State aid and by other gifts and endowments to greater power and influence. Universities, Normal Schools, Military, Agricultural Colleges under State control have taken into their hands in large extent the work of higher education, and are doing a great and useful service. In late years there has been much ground for apprehension that throughout our country the State institutions have become secularized, that they do not recognize and represent the religious principles of the people who founded them and who support them by taxation, and that the instructions and influences there given are away from the moral and religious principles of the homes from which the young men come. Attention was called a fortnight ago to the alarming statements made in one of the monthly magazines. It was a severe arraignment of the State Universities and gave a great shock to the moral and religious elements of our people. But last week the Christian Advocate of Nashville, reviewing this article, which had the startling title, "Blasting the Rock of Ages," declared that it is a piece of sensational advertising, that some of its statements are false, that some of the quotations are garbled, and the whole article unworthy of confidence. "It is a pernicious attempt to discredit good men and good schools solely to make a stir and sell more copies of the magazine." We sincerely hope that the Christian Advocate is, and will be shown to be, justified in its repudiation of these charges.

It would be well if as a result of these charges there should be a just and vigorous inquiry as to the facts. It would be well if there be an awakened concern as to the character, conduct and teachings of the professors in State institutions by those responsible, the directors and visitors, and the Governors who appoint them. And it would be well if there be a general and vigorous declaration of the rights of the people to whom the institutions belong.

A number of influences more or less to be regretted have acted on the colleges of the land. Ambition for enlargement and distinction, rivalries as to securing names of distinction, desire for a reputation for liberality and so-called academic freedom have tended to loosen some from their moorings. The Carnegie Pension Foundation, proposing to care for a few retired professors, on condition that the college be cut off from Church ties, has had an attraction strangely out of

proportion. This has brought about the Kentucky agitation over Central University, and the very animated debate in the Assembly at Savannah. In the Assembly also at Denver, last week, the subject was discussed vigorously by Dr. Cochran, the Secretary of Education for the Ministry. He attributed the decline in the number of candidates for the ministry to the absence of religious atmosphere in the State institutions.

Something has been done by the Church in various directions in sending college pastors to be resident, and to look well after the young people who come from Christian homes. And in many colleges the Young Men's Christian Association is doing a valuable work. But this is not all that conditions require. There should be a public opinion aroused, intelligent, outspoken, which will require that directors and visitors look well to the character and teachings of the men who teach the youth of the land. There is large room for freedom of thought and opinion. But there is no room in any institution supported by the people for professor or tutor whose life is not correct, who has not reverence, who does not enter the sanctuary, who is teaching that which is contrary to and destructive of the religion of the great body of the people.

This brings us to say that we look with the greatest interest upon the work which is to be done by our own Assembly's Committee of Schools and Colleges. We have been slow to set this committee forward in its work. We are hoping it will gather the facts as to our educational work, that it will inform our people concerning our institutions, their relation to the Church, their work and their fruits, and that unifying our system, it may be able to accomplish much in strengthening all and securing for our people schools and colleges, male and female, that will be protected from error and consecrated to a true and Christian education.

ENDUED WITH POWER.

In looking upon an Assembly of ministers and elders representing a great Church in a great land, in a great day of opportunity and progress, one very naturally reflects upon the spiritual possibilities that such a body of men represents. The eldership is composed of men who as a class combine to an unusual degree the qualities of good citizenship, intelligence, business capacity, moral force and distinctly Christian character. The impression that they make upon the communities in which they live and the aid which they may contribute to extending the borders of the Kingdom, are beyond estimate—if only they are endued plenteously with power from on high.

When we think of our ministers, their intellectual training, the sound, sublime system of divinity that they have been taught, the high moral and spiritual ideals with which they have been made familiar, the sacred character of the mission with which they are entrusted, the sublime truths that they are commissioned to proclaim, their grasp of the great free salvation that they are to offer, their realization of who it is that has called them and promises to be with them, and the assurance of the affusion of heavenly power upon their ministry, we may ask, What limitations may be placed upon their possibilities of service? Only the limitations involved